



Directorate of
Intelligence

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CIA DE NR 85-005

Narcotics Review



December 1985

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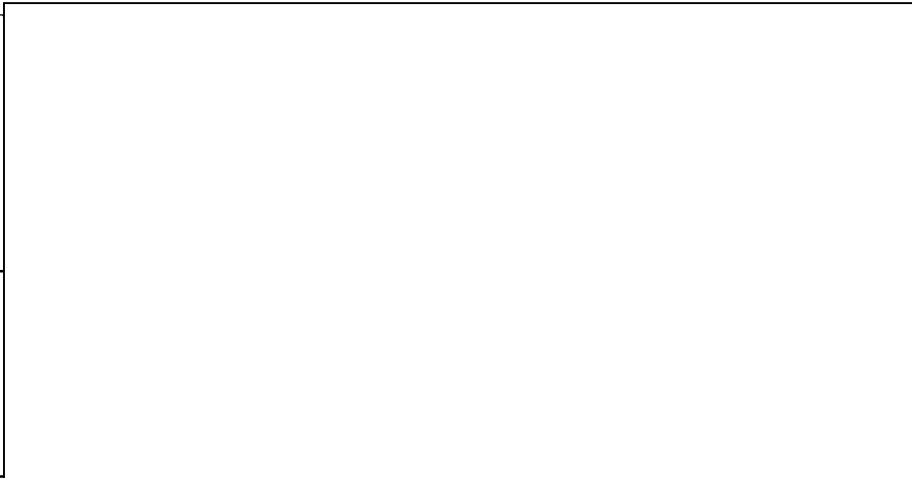
International: Narcodollar Crossroads

In response to the emergence of international drug trafficking as big business, a number of regional financial centers now function as the principal links between underground money systems in source areas and the international financial networks that service principal markets.

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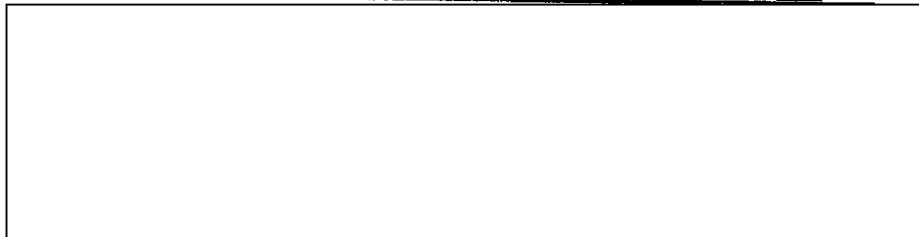


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Worldwide Narcotics Highlights



A summary of key developments from 1 October to 1 December 1985.



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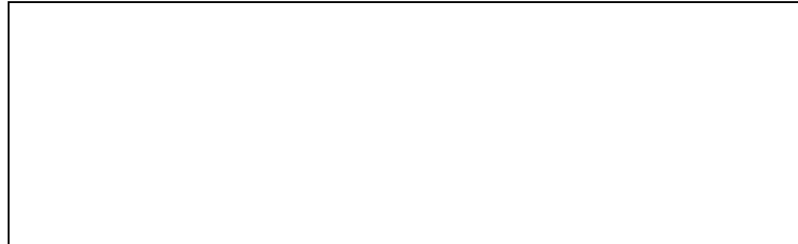
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Mexico

Mexico continues to struggle with narcotics-related corruption:



- Mexican police reported on 30 October the escape from prison of Jose Contreras Subias, the deputy of top drug trafficker Caro Quintero. Subias is implicated, along with Caro Quintero and Ernesto Fonseca, in the abduction and murder in February of DEA agent Enrique Camarena. According to Mexican press reporting, Subias allegedly bribed prison guards to secure his release. The incident refocuses attention on the Caro Quintero-Fonseca case, which the government has still not brought to court. 

In an apparent attempt to dissuade the Mexican Government from more forceful drug control measures, drug traffickers on 1 November ambushed and murdered some 20 police who reportedly were searching for drug crops in the Veracruz-Oaxaca border area. Press reports indicate that some of the victims were tortured before being killed execution style with a bullet in the head. Further reporting indicates that approximately 50 marijuana smugglers commanded by two families of drug traffickers were responsible for the killing. A massive search led by the military resulted in the arrest of some 20 suspects. In the aftermath, the Mexican Government announced it will establish a special task force to combat drug trafficking and cultivation in the states of Veracruz and Oaxaca. Manned by 40 members of the Federal Police, the force will be supported by 18 helicopters and military personnel. Drug control authorities probably believe that they need to act decisively to demonstrate that they will not be intimidated. We believe that an aggressive effort to regain control in southeastern Mexico, an area of greater narcotics activity in the past year, may lead to serious armed conflicts with the traffickers. 

The Mexican Government's eradication campaign is increasingly hampered by budgetary constraints and cannot keep pace with expanding opium poppy cultivation. 

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